Dear Jim,

10/12/76

More on the Mann act. (pun)

The lead article in the Pittsburgh Press TV section 10/1/76 is headed, "Pittsburgh Writer Uncovers New King Evidence." Subhead "Research for NBC Drama." The calim to newness and originality of work is emphasized in the lead by Barbara Holsopple (right): "New evidence uncovered by writer-producer Abby Mann has been turned over to the special House committee reopening the investigation of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. Mann, a former Pittsburgher, turned up the information while researching a drama he is writing about King for NBC."

It then reports that Mann turned this all over the Fauntroy, etc. and says he will be among the first witnesses.

"Mann said some of the new evidence deals with the stripping of security at the motel where King was shot...; 'important information' from a former FBI agent, and statement from other key witnesses." One is described as only Redditt.

"..!the more facts I (sic) uncover the more disturbed I become!....Mann's script for the three-hour film which he has just completed writing is about King's life, not the assassination..."

Well, it is clear that the NBC legal deaprtment did write me the lawyer's letter I suspected, with the typical smeantical evasions of what I said, by using language other than mine. Ha, hum. Federalese sure gets around.

I'll let them respond, as they said they would after further inquiry.

This is the kind of electrostatic copy that is hard for me to read and is not suitable for further copying. I'll ask my source if I can have the original. I think that for Les and me both this is important.

My source is one of the most dependable. If the former Pittsburgher makes the papers there again, have no doubt I'll get it!

I'll carbon Les, so he'll know.

The ethics of these wretched people!

Mann is doing a script, or has it completed. Lane has been working with him. NBC described it as a "special," I think in their net broadcast for NBC News. So what does Lane do once it is all written? He goes out to Hollywood and makes a pitch to one to whom Paul had spoken for me, for a movie. In short, he tried to con a producer into producing what Lane does not have except as with Mann, knowing Mann had done that and that it would be aired by NBC.

I think I'll write Fauntroy further, this time telling him that if he goes ahead I'll hold a press conference and make of him the jackass he has made of himself. That #$%&* would not talk about this when it made a difference. Now that it can get his name in the papers, he goes with an NBC ripoff. I'll kill this Mann/Lane/Fauntroy deal very publicly now if something doesno't happen to rectify the nasty things they have done. It may have a good effect on the committee, too. But I'll not write until after I speak to Les, who also wrote Fauntroy. I think Les may want to call his office first. He may not. We have not discussed this.

If I do I'll send copies to the entire committee. I may write Rick earlier and tell him what lies ahead if there is any more of this. If their eye is going to be on the tube rather than the fact the earlier it is certain the better and the less unsafe.

Best,

P.S. This Mann statement to the paper was long after he received my letter putting him on notice, long after I first wrote NBC's president by certified return-receipt mail. Mann got my letter, if I'm not saying how I know here.